

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

HISTORIC SITE SUMMARY SHEET

Survey #: P.G. #68-13-3

Building Date: 1927

Building Name: Cameo Theatre Building

Location: 3822 34th Street, Mt. Rainier, Maryland

Private/Religious/Occupied/Good/Accessible

Description

3822 34th Street is a large one story, three-bay red brick commercial building with an "L" shaped plan. The main (east) facade rises along the gentle slope of the west side of 34th Street. Each bay of the facade is defined by brick pilasters with concrete bases and terminated with inset decorative tiles. Above the pilasters are two heavy metal crown molded cornices. The facade is surmounted by a stepped parapet with metal flashing, concealing a flat roof. The three bays of the facade each contain an entrance. The north and south bays appear to have had large window openings flanking their entrances which have been bricked in, except for the multi-light wood frame transoms that remain. Centered on the facade and projecting above the stepped parapet is an electric sign in the shape of a cross.

Significance

Although its main facade has been altered, the large brick commercial building at 3822 34th Street (Block 7, Lots 23 and 24; Roger's Second Addition to Mt. Rainier) is significant as an example of early 20th century mixed-used construction. The building was erected to house the Cameo Theatre and also contained two streetfront shops. Access to the movie theater was provided by the center bay entrance and the shopfronts flanked it to the north and south. The present building was erected by 1927 by the Crawford-Spire Theatre Corporation. Dr. William B. Spire was a prominent local businessman who had operated a pharmacy in Mt. Rainier since 1917. With the completion of the new building, Spire's Pharmacy was relocated to occupy the southernmost storefront. Soon after its completion, the building's northern storefront became the site of the Mt. Rainier Branch of the U.S. Post Office, until the move to the present location at 3709 Rhode Island Avenue in 1953. Since 1956 the building has been owned by the Faith Evangelistic Church, Inc. and has been adapted by them for religious uses. While the bricked in windows and non-historic entry doors represent a loss of integrity, much of the building's exterior fabric and decorative details are intact and in good condition.

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Magi No.

DOE yes no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Cameo Theatre Building

and/or common Faith Evangelistic Church

2. Location

street & number 3822 34th Street not for publicationcity, town Mt. Rainier vicinity of congressional district 5

state Maryland county Prince George's

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<u> </u> district	<u> </u> public	<u>X</u> occupied	<u> </u> agriculture <u> </u> museum
<u>X</u> building(s)	<u>X</u> private	<u> </u> unoccupied	<u> </u> commercial <u> </u> park
<u> </u> structure	<u> </u> both	<u> </u> work in progress	<u> </u> educational <u> </u> private residence
<u> </u> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<u> </u> entertainment <u>X</u> religious
<u> </u> object	<u> </u> in process	<u> </u> yes: restricted	<u> </u> government <u> </u> scientific
	<u> </u> being considered	<u> </u> yes: unrestricted	<u> </u> industrial <u> </u> transportation
	<u>X</u> not applicable	<u>X</u> no	<u> </u> military <u> </u> other:

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Faith Evangelistic Church, Inc.

street & number 1111 Kirklynn Avenue telephone no.:

city, town Takoma Park state and zip code Maryland 20912

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Prince George's County Courthouse liber 2044

street & number Main Street folio 193

city, town Upper Marlboro state Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title Historic Sites and Districts Plan

date 1981 federal state X county local

depository for survey records Historic Preservation Commission, M-NCPPC, CAB, Rm. 401

city, town Upper Marlboro state Maryland

7. Description

Survey No. P.G. #68-133

Condition

☐ excellent
☐ good
☒ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check one

☒ original site

☐ moved date of move _____

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

3822 34th Street is a large one story, three-bay red brick commercial building with an "L" shaped plan. (See Slide #24.) The main (east) facade rises along the gentle slope of the west side of 34th Street. Each bay of the facade is defined by brick pilasters with concrete bases and terminated with inset decorative tiles. Above the pilasters are two heavy metal crown molded cornices. The facade is surmounted by a stepped parapet with metal flashing, concealing a flat roof. The three bays of the facade each contain an entrance. The southernmost bay has a centered single wooden door with a multi-light transom; the center bay has a double wooden door entrance and the northern bay has a single wooden door with a multi-light transom at left (south). The north and south bays appear to have had large window openings flanking their entrances. These have been bricked in, except for the multi-light wood frame transoms that remain. Other than its double door entrance, the center bay has been entirely bricked over and does not have a transom. Centered on the facade and projecting above the stepped parapet is an electric sign in the shape of a cross.

The main facade of this building has been altered. While the bricked in window openings and non-historic entry doors represent a certain loss of architectural integrity, much of the building's early exterior fabric, massing and decorative details are intact and in fairly good condition.

8. Significance

Survey No. P.G. #68-13-3

Period	Area of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates c. 1927

Builder/Architect

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☐ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

CONTRIBUTING

Although its main facade has been altered, the large brick commercial building at 3822 34th Street (Block 7, Lots 23 and 24; Roger's Second Addition to Mt. Rainier) is significant to the character of the survey area as an example of early 20th century mixed-used construction. The building was erected to house the Cameo Theatre and also contained two streetfront shops. Access to the movie theater was provided by the center bay entrance and the shopfronts flanked it to the north and south.

The present building was erected by 1927 by the Crawford-Spire Theatre Corporation. Dr. William B. Spire, a prominent local businessman, was a partner in the corporation that had purchased Lots 23 and 24 from Edgar and Lucy BonDurant in December of 1923.¹ The building appears to have been completed in 1927, when assessment records first indicate an improvement valued at \$25,000.² Prior to the erection of the present building, Lot 23 had remained unimproved and Lot 24 contained a two-story, rectangular plan frame dwelling.³

Dr. Spire had operated a pharmacy in Mt. Rainier since 1917.⁴ With the completion of the new building, Spire's Rexall Pharmacy was relocated from 3815 37th Street to occupy the southernmost storefront.⁵ Dr. Spire owned and operated what was then known as Spire's Cameo Pharmacy until 1944 when he sold it to Erwin Fraase who operated there under his own name for a number of years.⁶

Soon after its completion, the building's northern storefront became the site of the Mt. Rainier Branch of the U.S. Post Office, until the move to the present location at 3709 Rhode Island Avenue in 1953.⁷ Since 1956 the building has been owned by the Faith Evangelistic Church, Inc. and has been adapted by them for religious uses (see Chain of Title).

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
STATE HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY FORM
Statement of Significance (continued)

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Section 8 Page 2

Notes

- 1 Prince George's County Land Records, 205:315.
- 2 Prince George's County Assessment Records, E.D. 17, 1927, p. 59.
- 3 Sanborn Insurance Map, 1921, p. 4.
- 4 The Prince Georgian, 20 April 1945, p. 1.
- 5 Nelson's Suburban Directory, 1923.
- 6 The Prince Georgian, 14 April 1944, p. 1.
- 7 City of Mt. Rainier 75th Anniversary Book, 1985, p. 121.

Chain of Title
3822 34th Street

PG #68-13-3

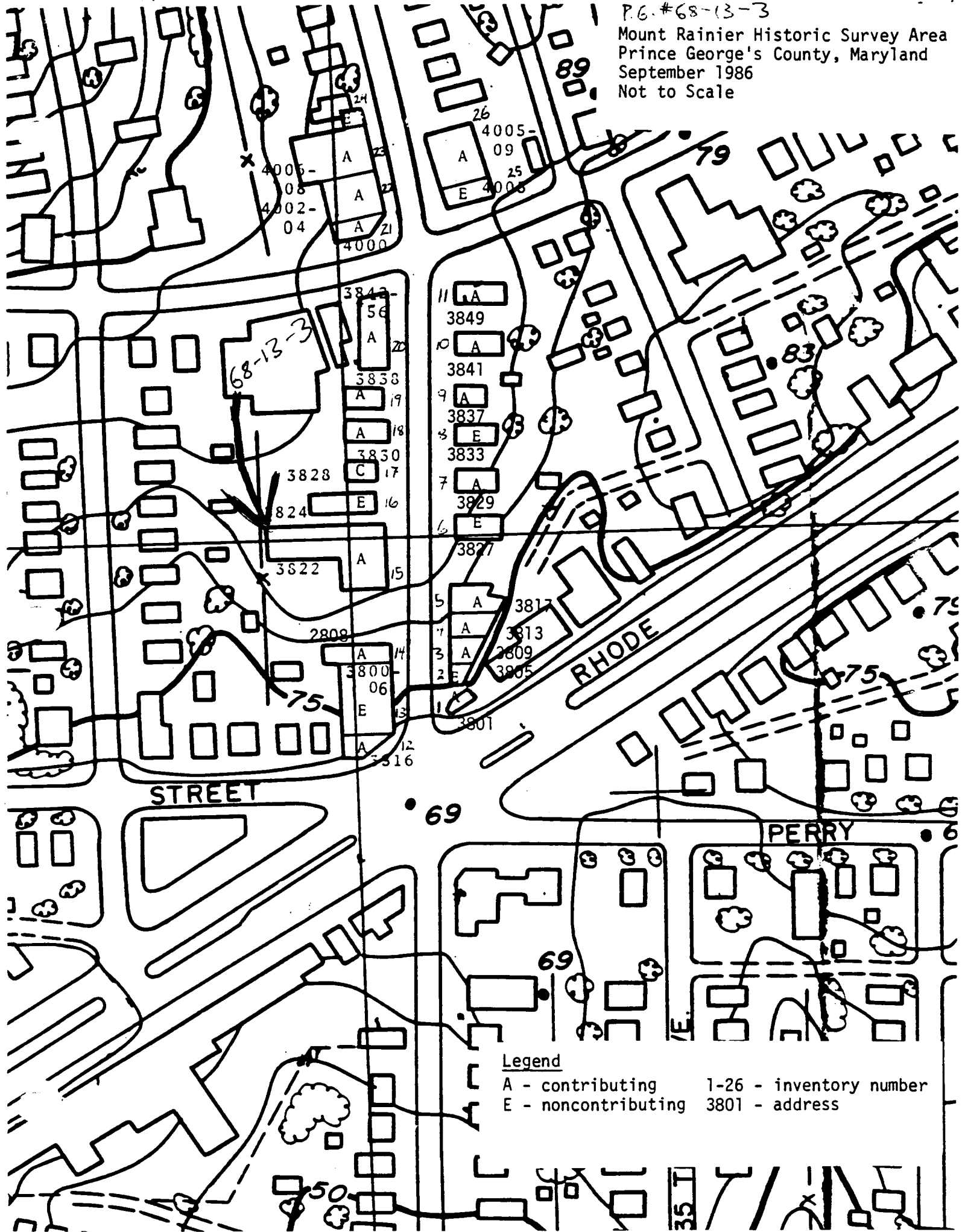
2044:193 11 October 1956 Deed	E. Leonard and Josephine A. Messick to Faith Evangelistic Church, Inc. Grantors convey Lots 23 and 24 in Block 7, Roger's Second Addition to Mt. Rainier. Plat recorded BDS 1:48. Same obtained from William H. and Leah L. Simons and Benjamin Rosen, 4 May 1946, 836:111.
836:111 4 May 1946 Deed	William H. and Leah L. Simons and Benjamin Rosen to E. Leonard and Josephine A. Messick. Grantors convey Lots 23 and 24 in Block 7. Same obtained from Edward C. and Marion M. Cole, 30 July 1945, 796:209.
796:209 30 July 1945 Deed	Edward C. and Marion M. Cole to William H. Simons, et al. Grantors convey Lots 23 and 24 in Block 7. Same obtained from Crawford-Spire Theatre Corporation, 30 July 1945, 796:202.
796:202 30 July 1945 Deed	Crawford-Spire Theatre Corporation to Edward C. Cole. Grantor conveys Lots 23 and 24 in Block 7. Lot 23 obtained from Edgar H. and Lucy M. BonDurant, 7 December 1923, 205:315. Lot 24 obtained from William Norton, 13 December 1923, 205:319.
205:315 7 December 1923 Deed	Edgar H. and Lucy M. BonDurant to Crawford-Spire Theatre Corporation. Grantors convey Lot 23 in Block 7. Same obtained from Rebecca B. and Orton E. Darnall, 19 July 1916, 115:346.
115:346 19 July 1916 Deed	Rebecca B. and Orton E. Darnall to Edgar H. BonDurant. Grantors convey Lot 23 in Block 7. Same obtained from Mary Jane and Wallace W. Parsons, 24 August 1907, 37:388.
37:388 24 August 1907 Deed	Mary Jane and Wallace W. Parsons to Rebecca B. Darnall. Grantors convey Lot 23 in Block 7. Same obtained from Florence V. and Fred A. Holden, 9 March 1907, 40:143.
40:143 9 March 1907 Deed	Florence V. and Fred A. Holden to Mary Jane Parsons. Grantors convey Lot 23 in Block 7. Same obtained from Mary Jane Parsons, 8 December 1906, 38:508.
38:508 8 December 1906 Deed	Mary Jane Parsons to Florence V. Holden. Grantor conveys Lot 23 in Block 7. Same obtained from Fred A. and Florence V. Holden, 15 August 1906, 30:545.
30:545 15 August 1906 Deed	Fred A. and Florence V. Holden to Mary Jane Parsons. Grantors convey Lot 23 in Block 7. Same obtained from Rush W. Conklin, 6 May 1906, 34:297.

- 2 -

34:297 6 May 1906 Deed	Rush W. Conklin to Fred A. and Florence V. Holden. Grantor conveys Lot 23 in Block 7. Same obtained from William C. and Robert R. Bengel, 13 June 1901, 1:552.
1:552 13 June 1901 Deed	William C. and Rachel R. Bengel to Rush W. Conklin. Grantor convey Lot 23 in Block 7. Same obtained from American Security and Trust Company, 13 June 1901, 2:575.
2:575 13 June 1901 Deed	American Security and Trust Company to William C. Bengel. Grantor conveys Lot 23 in Block 7. To clear title, this deed is made.
172:53 6 April 1909 Deed	Guy W. Latimer to Dr. William Norton. Grantor conveys Lot 24 in Block 7. Same obtained from Edgar H. and Lucy M. BonDurant, 31 March 1919, 142:59.
142:59 31 March 1919 Deed	Edgar H. and Lucy M. BonDurant to Guy W. Latimer. Grantors convey Lot 24 in Block 7. Same obtained from American Security and Trust Company, 21 May 1904, 19:229.
19:229 21 May 1904 Deed	American Security and Trust Company to Edgar H. BonDurant. Grantor conveys Lot 24 in Block 7. To clear title, this deed is made.

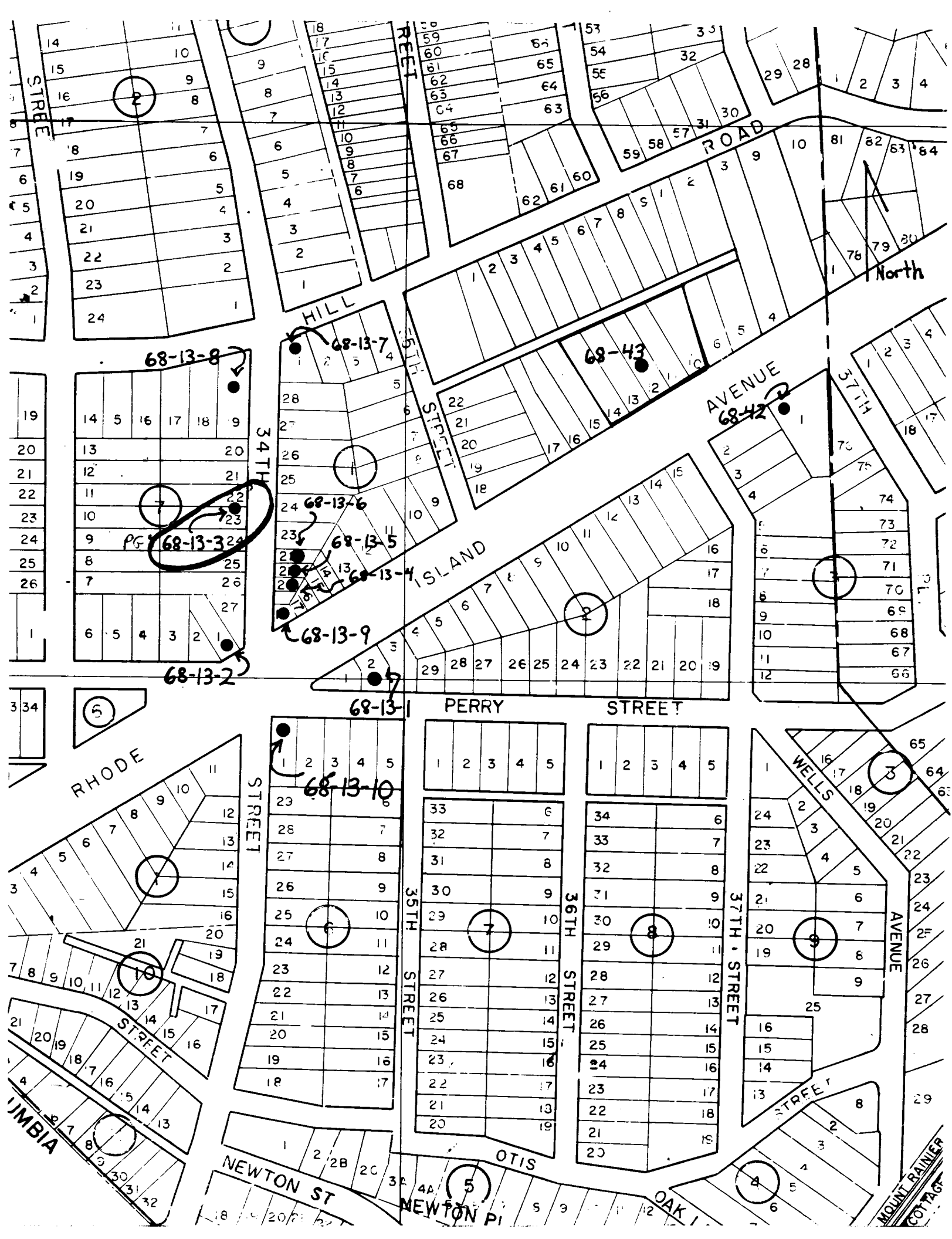
P.G. #68-13-3

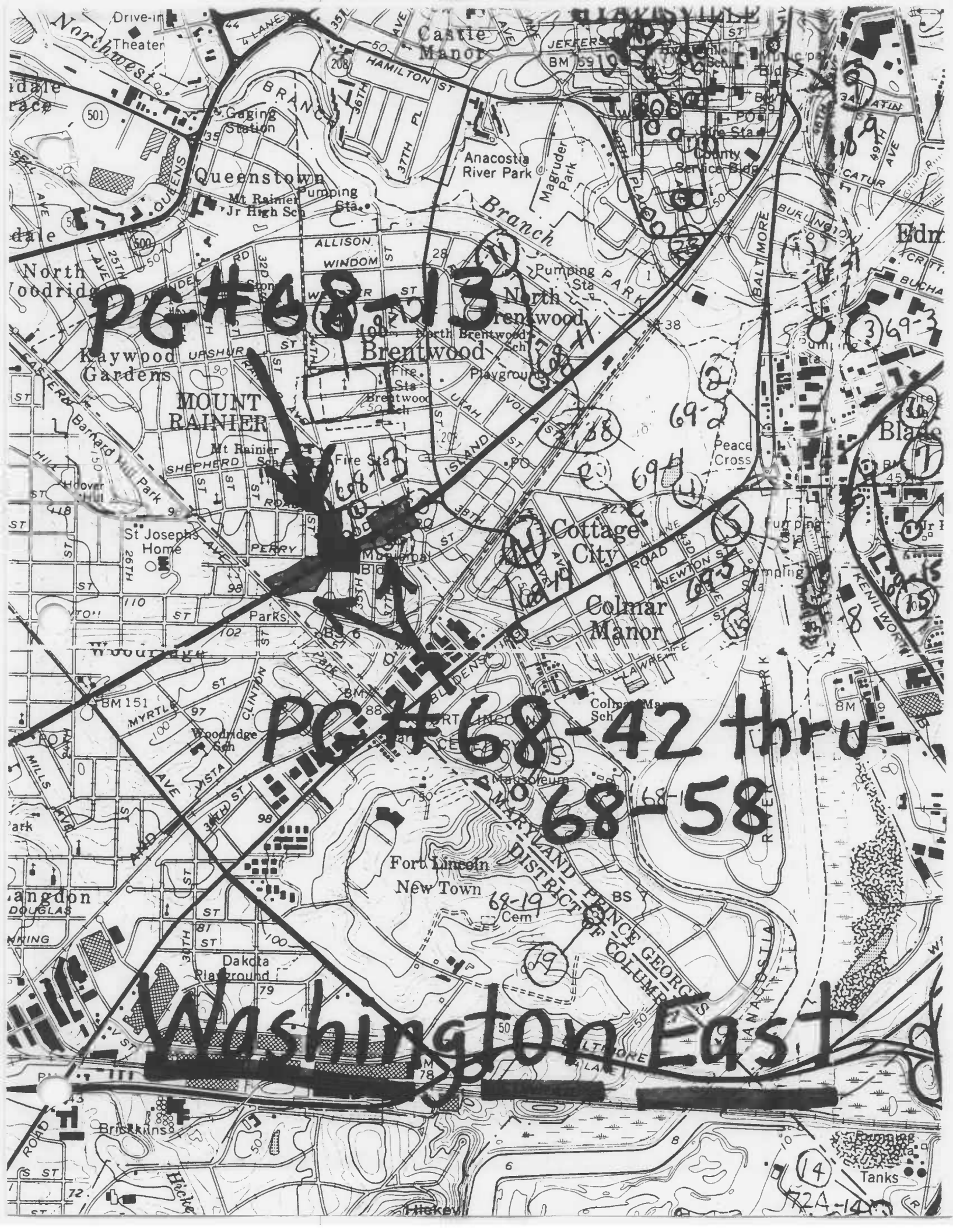
Mount Rainier Historic Survey Area
Prince George's County, Maryland
September 1986
Not to Scale



Legend

A - contributing 1-26 - inventory number
E - noncontributing 3801 - address





PG#68-13

PG#68-42 thru
68-58

Washington East



P.G. # 68-13-3

Camen Theatre

Prince Georges county, MD

Howard Berger

Fall, 1987

E
Neg: MD Historical Trust

Annapolis, MD